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LISA'S DREAM.

By the Author of "Courage and Cowards," &c.



LISA! Lisa! look, quick! Did you ever see such dreadful, horrible, dirty little wretches?

Lisa jumped up at once, almost letting her doll fall, in her eagerness to see what wonderfully horrible things Charlie was looking at. "Horrible things were so truly delightful!" as Lisa and Charlie had often agreed.

The two children had spent the whole morning in sight-seeing with Uncle Tom, with whom they and their mamma were spending a few days; for as they did not very often come to London, of course they wanted to see everything. Indeed, Charlie would have liked to be seeing something the whole day long, he found it so very dull in the house, and there was no garden, and his ball *would* go through the window, and Jumper *would* bark so loud that the footman came up and carried him off to the lower regions, thereby putting an end to their game. After this, Charlie had disconsolately seated himself at the window, but he had not extracted much amusement from what he saw in the street, till his sudden call roused Lisa, and made her come and join him.

What did she see? only a little chimney-sweep, as black as he could be, and a little ragged crossing-sweeper, not much cleaner. But, to Charlie's great amusement, these poor little boys were fighting, and looking as angry as two turkey-cocks. He watched them for some moments, much as if they had been Punch and Judy, and was intensely delighted when at last a policeman came up and took both boys away with him. The next instant he would have been as much in want of something to do as ever; but, fortunately, just then mamma came in, and both Charlie and Lisa had enough to do in telling her all the wonders they had seen with Uncle Tom.

"And mamma," said Lisa, "Uncle Tom said something so very odd. Charlie says, 'He's sure it can't be true.' It was about the queen's crown."

"Yes," interrupted Charlie, "he said diamonds were charcoal, and

sapphires clay. But I know he only said it to chaff Lisa, because she thought them so fine—just like a girl, you know, mamma !”

Poor Lisa looked a little ashamed, for she was fond of pretty things, of course, because she was a girl. We all know boys are much more dignified, and would at any time rather make mud-pies or sail their boats in a puddle than see the most splendid jewels in the world. To tell the truth, Charlie had been as much interested by the fight between the two sweepers as by anything else he had seen that day, excepting the thumbscrews, and other delightful instruments of torture kept in the Tower. So he turned up his little nose at Lisa, and looked very wise, as he repeated : “ It was only Uncle Tom’s chaff !”

“ Indeed, Master Charlie, you are mistaken ; Uncle Tom was not ‘ chaffing,’ ” said mamma. Whereat Lisa brightened up, and Charlie opened his eyes very wide, as he answered : “ Well, mamma, it’s impossible to know what Uncle Tom means ; he nearly always does chaff. But ”—he added, feeling rather vexed at having taken himself in by too great wisdom—“ how can diamonds be charcoal ? It’s black and thick, and they are white and clear like glass.”

Lisa looked at the diamond in one of her mamma’s rings, but she could make nothing out of it ; and Charlie went on, “ Well, mamma, why don’t people make them if they are only charcoal ?”

“ Ah ! Charlie ! we are not clever enough for that ! I can only tell you that a diamond is made of the same ‘ stuff,’ as you would say, as charcoal, and coal, yes, and even soot,” said mamma, as Lisa caught at a large smut which was sailing by.

“ And the beautiful blue sapphire in the queen’s crown, is it only clay ?”

“ It might have been clay used to make a china cup, or it might have been emery to brighten our needles, if it had not been the beautiful stone it is.”

“ They are all made of the same stuff then ? It’s very wonderful, but I don’t a bit understand how it can be ! Can’t you tell us, mamma ?”

“ I am afraid not, Lisa, because I really don’t at all know how to make a diamond or sapphire, though I know pretty well what they are made of.”

“ That’s rather like the pudding I tried to make,” said Charlie ; “ cook gave me all the right things to put in, but somehow they

wouldn't go properly together at all, and it didn't turn out a bit like a pudding."

They all three laughed at the remembrance of Charlie's pudding, and then mamma said, "Who can tell me what snow is?"

"Rain! water!" cried the two children together.

"And ice?"

"Water too, but they are not at all alike! and sometimes the snow is in beautiful stars, and sometimes it isn't, and yet it is the same stuff still. Oh! and mamma, the steam out of the urn, I know it is water too, because I have caught it on a plate, all in drops—and the clouds, they are water too, and they are all sorts of different beautiful colours when the sun shines on them. Isn't it wonderful?"

"Very wonderful, my darling," said mamma; and then Lisa sat quite still for a moment thinking, till she suddenly exclaimed in delight: "And Charlie's horrid little sweep is only covered with diamonds in disguise! It makes more beautiful things in the world than there were before, at least than I knew before!"

"Just like Lisa!" observed Charlie, "always making a story out of everything. Now you have told her that, mamma, I shouldn't wonder if she spent all her time in catching smuts, till we go back to the country; and she'll certainly run after the next little beastly dirty sweep, and tell him he has got a bag of diamonds, like her pet Sinbad the sailor."

"But they are not exactly diamonds after all," said Lisa, softly, "only perhaps they might have been, if——" but Lisa finished the sentence to herself, and Charlie began to tell his mamma about the fight, to which Lisa did not listen much. She was thinking about the jewels still, and puzzling her little head extremely, as to why all the smuts should not be diamonds. It would make the world much prettier. But then—"Ah! they would hit rather hard if they flew about in the air though," she concluded aloud, and Charlie stopped suddenly short to ask what in the world she was talking about now.

"It was only—I was thinking, if all the smuts were diamonds," answered Lisa, half ashamed. "It seems very hard for them always to be so black and dirty, poor things! nobody likes smuts, but everybody likes diamonds—almost; and yet they are made just of the same stuff. I dare say the diamonds are quite ashamed of them!"

What Charlie's answer might have been, if he had been listening, it

is of course impossible to say; for he was peeping out of the window, and now cried out, "Mamma! look! that horrid little crossing-sweeper has come back again. Isn't he a dreadful little figure! he ought to be ashamed of himself!"

"I don't like to hear my Charlie call any one 'horrid'; certainly not that poor little boy, who perhaps is quite as good as himself."

Charlie looked astonished, but his mamma was evidently quite serious, though her next question was a very odd one. "In what way are you better than the little crossing-sweeper?"

"Why, mamma, I am quite entirely different," he said, with a red face; but his mamma only smiled, as she said, "Then I am afraid you must be a very odd sort of little animal, and not a boy at all! Pray, how many legs and arms have you got? And what are you made of?"

"Oh! mamma!" interrupted Lisa, delighted, "it's like the smuts—he's made just of the same stuff, only one's a diamond—I mean one's a sweeper—and—what do I mean?" she concluded, quite confused with the puzzle she had got herself into.

"Quite right, Lisa, though you have not explained it very clearly. Charlie and the sweeper are both made of flesh and blood and bones."

Charlie did not seem to admire the comparison, and remarked: "That he certainly was the cleaner of the two."

"The sweeper might be made clean if he had any one to wash him and give him clean new clothes."

"He's very naughty, I'm sure," said Master Charlie. "I don't fight like that."

"I hope not, Charlie; you have been taught better, but that poor little boy perhaps has not been taught at all. If he had been brought up as you have been, he would probably have been quite as good as you; and if you had lived in his home, I am afraid you would not have been any better than he is. So next time you see him, instead of calling him 'horrid,' just think to yourself that you might have been like him, or worse, if God had not given you a papa and mamma able to take care of you and teach you what is right. And then, Charlie boy, there is one more thing you must think of, that if, with all your advantages, you are not a great deal better than the poor sweeper, some day he may be a great deal better off than you."

Charlie looked serious, for he knew what his mamma meant, only it

had never struck him that the little crossing-sweeper might some day be a bright angel in heaven—he did look so very dirty!

He did not altogether like the idea either of being no better than the sweeper, and could not quite bring his mind to allow it. He confided this to Lisa as soon as they were left alone again, and the conversation served to keep him quiet for some time.

"Now, Lisa, if I and the boy were out there together sweeping the crossing, I'm sure you wouldn't think we were the same, would you?" asked Charlie, looking down at his velvet knickerbockers and scarlet stockings.

Lisa shook her head, as she answered slowly, "But the clothes are not you, Charlie, you know; they don't even grow on you as the bird's feathers do, and you didn't even buy them. Besides, don't you know what nurse says sometimes, 'Fine feathers make fine birds,' and when you haven't got your fine feathers on, or when you've been down to the pond, you know, Charlie, you do look a little dirty, not like the sweeper," added Lisa, for fear of hurting his feelings, "but a *little* dirty!"

It was quite true! Charlie remembered a particular day, when he had been "swarming" a fir tree, and had come down with a torn jacket, patches of dirty green all over his knickerbockers, and torn hands besides, not to mention a large yellow stain where his pocket was, which was caused by the unfortunate smashing of the bird's eggs he had been up to get.

"I was in an awful jolly mess that day, wasn't I; Lisa? and I dare say I should be every day if nurse didn't bother. I suppose that little boy has got no nurse; it must be awful jolly for him. There! and it's beginning to rain, and he won't be obliged to go home. I do like being out in the rain. But even if I were ever so dirty, I can read and write, Lisa, and I am learning French and Latin, nasty horrid things! I dare say he doesn't know his letters. I shall ask him when we go out to-morrow morning, and then I'll tell mamma that's the difference."

Charlie looked quite satisfied with himself, till Lisa reminded him that he could not have learnt without some one to teach him, and the little sweeper might have learnt too if he had been sent to school.

"You see, dear, we are all made of the same stuff," said Lisa; she didn't quite know what to say, and she was still thinking about the

diamonds; "and I've heard mamma say that diamonds look quite dirty and dull till they are cut and polished."

Charlie stared at her for a minute, thinking she was half asleep, and then announced that the sweeper was going away. It was growing dark now, and the rain was coming down very fast, as the little boy shouldered his broom and walked off with bare feet.

A sudden thought struck Charlie and made him sit quite still for a second. "Where was the little sweeper's home?"

Lisa thought very likely it was in one of those dreadful little houses nurse had been telling her of, where the streets were so narrow you could hardly see the sky, and everything was black and dirty and dismal; and she sat in the twilight wondering about it till nurse came to tell her they must be dressed for tea.

But no sooner were the dressing and the tea over, than Lisa and Charlie scampered away down to the drawing-room, and when they were there, instead of looking at their new books as nurse advised, they preferred getting inside the window-curtains, and squeezing their faces against the window, to watch the twinkling lamps and the splashing, pattering rain.

"Oh, dear!" groaned Charlie, as he rubbed his nose flat against the glass; "I wonder if we *are* made of the same stuff; because you see, Lisa, if we are, I don't see it at all, and I think it's very hard and a great shame!"

Lisa did not quite understand, but she said, "Perhaps it won't be always, but there are a great many things I should like to know about, and we will ask mamma about it when we go home. I hope he is not out in the rain, Charlie," she whispered, as the drops came down thicker and faster. "He has got such very bad chilblains, and no shoes."

But Charlie only jerked himself away, and said gruffly, "I wish you wouldn't be such a plague, Lisa," while he squeezed his nose flatter than ever against the window, and a moment after began to whistle, "Paddle your own canoe," which seemed very unfeeling of him. Lisa said no more, but she wished all the sweepers, both of chimneys and crossings, could have nice warm knickerbockers and worsted stockings and strong shoes. But long before she had settled all she would like to do for them, she and Charlie went down to dessert.

"Well, Mr. Knickerbocker! a pretty mess you have made of your-

self!" exclaimed Uncle Tom; "you have been up the chimney, I should think!"

Lisa started, half-frightened, as she looked at Charlie and noticed his stained face. She wondered whether he could have been looking up a chimney in the hope of finding a diamond, or to see how he should like to be a chimney-sweep. But she felt sure he would tell her if he had made any discoveries, and therefore to shield him from Uncle Tom's remarks, she said they had only been looking out of the window, and then she chattered away faster than usual, till Charlie came back with a bright, shining face. By this time Uncle Tom had forgotten all about the matter, and was soon so busy talking to mamma, that the only further notice he took of his nephew was to give him an orange and some almonds and raisins, all of which disappeared with marvellous rapidity. Charlie was more silent than usual, and Lisa, as she looked at him under her eyelashes, began to feel sure he had seen something wonderful.

As soon as nurse left the room that night, after seeing Miss Lisa safe in bed comfortably tucked up, and the candle out, before she went down to her supper, Lisa softly got up again, and going to the window, peeped behind the blind. But the drizzling rain had ceased, and snow was falling instead. Already by the light of the lamps Lisa could see there was a thin white covering on the dingy window-ledge; and, as she stood sleepily watching the flakes floating gently down, she whispered dreamily, "It's the same stuff still, though; the dirty black rain, and the bright, white snow—the same stuff."

"Are you talking about it still, Lisa?" quoth Charlie, who had entered unperceived, with his little red dressing-gown round him, and his curly hair rumpled up in a wonderful state of roughness.

Lisa was too sleepy to be much astonished, and Charlie went on, "Well, now, I wonder if he is made of the same stuff, because if he is, perhaps he feels like us, and so—perhaps Lisa he likes raisins—eh! do you think he does?" and Charlie produced the identical bunch which disappeared so mysteriously from his plate, adding, in a funny, half-ashamed voice, "We'll try to-morrow, if you'll keep them, Lisa, because you see nurse might come poking into my drawer, and she might think they were meant for her, or, you know—I might perhaps eat them in my sleep."

So the raisins were put safely away; Charlie went back to his room,

and Lisa lay down again in her little bed, too sleepy to ask him whether he had discovered anything in the chimney, but smiling to herself, and repeating over and over, as her eyelids drooped lower and lower, "It's all the same stuff—all the same; Charlie and the sweeper, and the dirty rain and the white snow; diamonds and smuts, and—and the same stuff;" and what had become of Lisa? She was quite wide-awake, but somehow or other she seemed to have got into the street, and was contentedly watching the snowflakes fall around her, without feeling either cold or wet. There was one beautiful large snowflake floating towards her like a star! it seemed such a pity it should fall upon the dirty pavement, that Lisa put out her hand to save it; but, as she did so, the snowflake grew larger and larger, till she saw it was a snowflake no longer, but a child as big as herself, dressed in shining white and with a face which somehow reminded her of the little crossing-sweeper, only that it was so much cleaner. He nodded to Lisa and smiled, saying, "I am not always dirty, you see; I am nearly as clean as Master Charlie himself."

"A great deal cleaner," answered Lisa; "but how did you get so clean?"

"Oh! that was easy enough: I am not naturally dirtier than Master Charlie, but I had the misfortune to fall into the gutter a few days ago, and there I was obliged to lie till the sun kindly sent down a sunbeam to pick me up, and then Jack Frost turned me into a snow-star."

"But I wonder how it was the sun made you clean?" persisted Lisa.

"The sun sent for *me*, and of course he left the dirt behind; the dirt was not *me*, as he knows very well. It is no matter where I drop, he knows how to find me—and I am going now; I can't stay much longer, you're so warm, and I am afraid I shall soon be in the gutter again—but never mind!"

"Oh! do stop one moment! do tell me, aren't you the little crossing-sweeper? oh! dear! dear! what is going to become of you?" exclaimed Lisa, in despair.

"I'm only *melting*!" said a faint voice; "but I am the same stuff still—mind that, and I am not dirty; it's only your dirty streets that are to blame if I look dirty to-morrow."

The voice ceased, and the beautiful snow-star was quite gone, and

Lisa could have cried, as she said, "Oh! if it had but fallen into a clean place!"

The snow melted as fast as it fell, and the pavement and roads were horribly wet and dirty. She watched the flakes falling for some time, but there were no more like that one strange star; and when, at last, the snow changed into a drizzling rain, Lisa's only thought was that there would be plenty of work for the crossing-sweeper. What a quantity of horribly dirty mud!

"Horrible dirty mud, indeed!" was repeated by something or somebody; "much you know about it! why if we had had *advantages*, we should have been diamonds and sapphires—it is only the advantages that make the difference."

Lisa looked round, half-expecting to see the chimney-sweep with a sack of diamonds on his back, and his clothes powdered with diamond-dust besides, but she saw nothing but the wet streets and the falling rain. She began to feel cold and miserable, and her feet were wet. Looking down to see how this was, to her astonishment she saw her toes peeping through the ends of her shoes, and her frock had grown, oh! so shabby and full of holes, and her straw hat was so ragged it would hardly keep on her head. She was very hungry, too, and her poor little hands were swollen and red with chilblains; but somehow, after the first moment, she was not in the least puzzled by the change in herself, and she stood there shivering in the cold grey morning light, as if she had been accustomed to it all her life. She fancied she knew the house opposite which she was standing, and she felt as if it were her duty to sweep the crossing in front of it; so she took up the old broom, which was lying there ready, and began. But oh! she was so very, very hungry, and her hands and feet did ache so bitterly, she could hardly help crying. By-and-by, the door of the great house opposite opened, and out came a pleasant-looking gentleman, holding the hands of a little boy and girl. They looked so warm and comfortable, and Lisa knew they were Uncle Tom and Charlie, and the little girl was her other self, dressed up in her own warm jacket and frock; but they did not seem to know the poor little sweeper, though Uncle Tom did give her a penny. She heard Charlie say to the little girl, "Lisa, how nice it must be to stand in the mud and have no lessons and no nurse:" and she very nearly cried out to him that "it was not nice at all, and that even lessons were better than hunger and

cold." But the sharp wind froze the words on her lips, and she did not speak, though she thought to herself, "I was Lisa once, when I lived in a nice house and had warm clothes and plenty to eat; now I am only a little crossing-sweeper, but I am the same stuff still—the same stuff—only I had the misfortune to fall into the gutter." She was dreaming now about the wonderful snow-star, for the cold made her very sleepy; and presently she crouched down in a corner, drew her tattered frock round her to keep off as much of the cold wind as she could, and rocked herself to and fro in a dreamy sort of way, murmuring, "I hope the sunbeam will soon come down and fetch me; the little white boy said it would, and leave the mud behind; I'm sorry for the mud too; it might have been diamonds and beautiful stones if it had fallen into another place—that's like me; I might have been Lisa, but I fell into the gutter instead; but I shan't stay there, nor will the little white boy. I wonder if he was only a snow-star—it did seem such a pity he fell into the mud; but the sunbeams are coming to fetch us all away, and perhaps I shall have a bright dress covered with snow-stars!"

By this time the poor little girl was fast asleep, in spite of the cold wind, and she slept till she felt some one touching her shoulder and trying to rouse her. She looked up in a fright, expecting to be ordered off by a policeman, but, to her great surprise and relief, it was only nurse standing by her bedside and saying, "Come, Miss Lisa! how sleepy you do seem! and the sun's shining so bright, it's dried up the pavements beautiful, that is, for London. I never did see such a dirty place; and the smuts as come in at these top windows, it's something surprising!"

"Ah! they might have been diamonds, if only they had dropped somewhere else!" sighed Lisa, in a dreamy tone.

"Might have been diamonds! Miss Lisa, what are you dreaming about? Come! do rouse up, there's a dear, or you won't be ready for breakfast!"

Lisa felt as if she should like to lie quiet and think over all the wonderful things she had heard and seen. But she was too glad to see nurse again to think her tiresome, as she often had done before; so she only flung her arms round the old woman's neck, and kissed her heartily, as she said, "Dear old Nursey! and you might have been a policeman! I will never think you tiresome again!"

Nurse was too much puzzled to make any answer; but Lisa said so many strange things in the course of the dressing about snow-stars and crossing-sweepers, and smuts and diamonds, that nurse made up her mind to tell her mistress she was quite sure Miss Lisa had been overtired with sight-seeing, and would be quite ill if she had much more of it.

The very moment she was dressed, Lisa rushed down to the breakfast-room, and finding no one there, climbed up on a chair to look over the wire blinds and see if the crossing-sweeper were there. She was still so full of her dream, and it seemed so wonderfully real, she could hardly believe it was only a dream. The little boy was there, as dirty as ever, so that it was difficult to imagine him a snow-star. Lisa sighed as she thought to herself, "He might have been Charlie if he had been born in a nice house, instead of falling into the gutter." You see her dream kept coming back to her, and the little boy and the snow-star were confused in her mind. Of course she told Charlie all about it when he came down; and though he interrupted her rather gruffly once or twice, and was inclined to whistle, Lisa was quite satisfied with the attention he gave her.

"And so, Charlie, you see," she concluded, "he does feel the same, and I am sure he will like the raisins; but he is so very hungry, I don't think you have ever been so hungry; and his hands and feet do ache so; and when he sees us go out in our warm things——"

"Don't!" said Charlie, in a very gruff voice, and he ran fairly out of the room, for he was not a hardhearted boy after all, and this talk was becoming too much for his feelings. He came back again in a minute or two, however, and standing behind Lisa, said in his funny little short way: "I say, I suppose *he*"—and he gave a little jerk with his elbow towards the window—"I suppose *he* would like a new pair of shoes, as you say his chilblains hurt him, so if you'll give half——"

Lisa turned round and gave him a kiss, she was so pleased, and Charlie went on, "But don't you go and dream about the chimney-sweep to-night, Lisa, because, I say, I can't stand it; it's a chouse, it is! for I meant to buy the boat this very morning, and Uncle Tom will be sure to chaff, but as you say, we're the same stuff——"

The rest of Charlie's speech was interrupted by the appearance of mamma and Uncle Tom. Both children were rather silent during breakfast; but when it was over Lisa crept up to Uncle Tom, behind

the newspaper, and whispered something which made him laugh, though he answered kindly, with an odd sort of twinkle in his eyes: "May you, little one? to be sure, anything you like, while you are in



London." And a few moments after, Lisa and Charlie were at the hall-door, taking the little crossing-sweeper such a breakfast as he had never seen before. When he saw him eating it, Charlie had no longer


any doubt as to whether he were made of the same "stuff" as himself. Before he and Lisa went to their house in the country, the little sweeper had his comfortable shoes, and a warm old coat of Charlie's, which mamma had given him. Lisa never forgot her dream, and for years after, whenever she saw a poor little beggar-child, she would say to herself, "It might have been Lisa, and I might have been a beggar, if God had not been so good to me." But, as she grew older, she thought less about being made of the same "stuff," and more about a verse in her favourite hymn-book—

"And God loveth *all* His children,
Rich and poor and high and low;
And they all shall meet in heaven
Who have served Him here below."

The cold and the hunger would all be over *then*, left behind for ever, and this thought comforted her, whenever she thought of the crossing-sweeper.

SELINA GAYE.

RATHER A LONG WALK.

WHEN I was a boy, ever so long ago, when the world and everything in it seemed much pleasanter to me than they do now—though I manage to live pretty contentedly now, thank God—I used to consider that if I walked twelve or fifteen miles I had had a very long walk indeed, and one that entitled me to a few days' rest. I have seen a good many places and things since then, and travelled many a weary mile on foot and on horseback; and I am now going to tell you of one journey I once made on foot, which I think you will be inclined to call rather a long walk, or series of walks, for of course I did not do it all in one day.

This is how it was: I was staying in a small seaport town in the far north of Australia, and I began to think that it was time to look for some work to earn some more money, for I had not more left than would pay for two or three days' food. Now I was not at all fond of what is called "hard work." I had often tried it, and I found, or thought, that it did not suit my constitution (this also was when I was much younger than I am now). Besides, I was awkward and clumsy

at it, and could not do half so much as many men much weaker than myself, because I did not know how to use my strength. In the same way, a clever, idle boy will be often taken down in his class by a hard-working, plodding fellow who has not nearly as much ability.

(This is the meaning of educating [*e-duco*], bringing out what is within and making the most of it.)

But leaving all that, I had made up my mind that manual labour—hard work—was not my forte; so, of course, as I must do something to earn my living, I was going to look for some employment of a lighter description.

Ah, me! when sitting at the far end of the table, an usher in a school, and eating thin bread and butter, spread with an oniony knife, I have often sighed for the chance of hard work and freedom and appetite—forgetting that I was once only too glad to run away from those very things. But where on earth am I straying?

Such being the case, I determined to walk up the bush and look for a job of shepherding—an employment that certainly did not involve much hard work, as things are managed in Australia. In looking over my resources I found that I had left seven shillings in cash, a pair of blue blankets rather the worse for wear, a triangular piece of looking-glass, with all the stuff at the back—whatever it is—rubbed off (this I threw away as useless), a Church Service, which I had carried about with me for two or three years, a tolerably good comb, a towel, a clay pipe, a spare shirt and trousers, and half a bar of soap. This was all my worldly wealth. Just then my tongue strayed to the roof of my mouth—I jumped up; I had discovered a treasure, and one that I had carried about me for the last four years without thinking about it. I had in the front of my mouth—a false tooth! “A wonderful discovery this, truly,” you will say; “how on earth could a false tooth help you in Australia?”

Wait a bit, my young friends, I did not say it could; but mine happened to be fastened to the roof of my mouth in some mysterious way that I never could understand by a plate of gold. Fancy discovering a gold mine in one’s mouth! It hurt me rather pulling it out, for it had not been moved since it was put in; but I thought to myself, I wish a few more of my teeth had gold plates to them, wouldn’t I pull them out!

So I got this tooth out, and went about trying to sell it; and I had

not far to go. There was a chemist in the town, who also professed to be a dentist, and he offered to buy it, but at first he would not give me enough for it. Finally, he agreed to give me ten shillings for it, which was not more than the value of the gold plate, but I was obliged to take that or nothing. There was an ugly great gap in the front of my mouth; but I considered that people would not care much for appearances in the bush, where I was going.

When I was a little boy six years old, I was playing bagatelle with a party of other children, and I am sorry to say that one young lady of seven lost her temper, and threw a bagatelle ball at me, or at the company generally—I don't remember which—and broke one of my front teeth right off; a false one had been put in to fill up the gap; but I was sitting before the fire in my rooms at Oxford one morning, and sneezed so violently that my tooth flew up the chimney. Then I got another, which went overboard one day when I was looking over the side of a ship. And the present one was the third.

I had now the sum of seventeen shillings, and I thought I might as well stay a day or two longer before starting, so that when I actually did start I was no better off than I was at first, and had lost my tooth into the bargain.

At last I felt that I must go. I spent all my money except one shilling in laying in a small stock of tea, sugar, and tobacco (those three things are necessities in the bush); and I also bought a quart pot to boil the tea in, and a pint pot to drink it out of, and a box of matches. When this was done, I started with my blankets strapped to my shoulders, and all my goods inside, and walked ten miles out of the town.

I knew I must walk about a hundred miles before I got into the country where they wanted shepherds; but for most of this distance the houses were never more than twenty miles apart, so that I was sure of a good lodging every night, and travellers always get a hearty welcome in the bush.

In England you read every week of people starving to death in the midst of plenty. In Australia there are no such people as beggars, and yet no one ever starves, if there is any one near who is able to prevent it—the will is never wanting.

Thus it is a common thing to find men travelling through the length and breadth of the land without money, and depending on hospitality for their daily food.

I shall not say much about the first hundred miles, which I accomplished in about a week. I met with no particular adventures: the road was good, and easily found; I met plenty of travellers, some on foot and others on horseback; long trains of bullock drays, each drawn by eight or ten bullocks, and loaded with wool. Sometimes I used to meet them just as they were "camping" for the night, by the side of some creek or waterhole, and then I stayed with the drivers, and slept under one of the drays.

These drays bring the wool in great bales from stations hundreds of miles up the bush, and are often some months on their journey. They cannot go more than about ten miles in a day.

When the wool has been left at the port ready for shipping, they either return empty, or else carry up "stores" for the station. The men have very long whips, which they do not always use to whip the bullocks. The cracking is generally enough.

I used to hear many interesting and amusing stories of real life in the bush by the camp fires in the evening: when I am not writing about anything else I may perhaps tell you some of them.

If I met one of them going my way, I used to ride for a mile or two on the top of the wool to rest my feet.

Very often the only road to be found is made by the track of these drays; and when a tree or a log is in the way, each dray takes a winding track round it, so that sometimes the road seems to branch off in three or four directions; all these tracks are nearly sure to meet again further on.

As I made progress on my journey, the sights and sounds of the bush began to be more numerous and interesting. Emus stalked and ran in companies of three or four together across the road. Kangaroos were quite a common sight, and one day I counted more than twenty of them in a drove. The birds were chiefly parrots, cockatoos, and laughing jackasses. But the noise of birds is seldom heard in the bush (in Queensland, North Australia), except in the mornings and evenings, and near water.

The "bell-bird" keeps on all day. He is so called because his note resembles almost exactly the distant tinkling of a bullock-bell or horse-bell.

Travelling in the bush at midday, you would be apt to notice most the chirping of the insects called by the colonists locusts and crickets.

These keep up a constant "simmering" noise at noon, which resembles very much the singing of a gigantic kettle. During this first part of my journey the country was pretty flat, and covered with the smaller kind of gum trees, one tree being exactly like another as far as the eye could see. Put a stranger down in such country as this, and just turn him round twice, he would probably wander helplessly about till he died of thirst.

All this country was occupied by cattle, which are allowed to stray about pretty much as they please over it, only visited now and then by the "stockman" to keep them together, and prevent them from straying too far.

At the end of this first week I came to the banks of a mighty river, which had been flooded by rains up the country. These rivers are dry for nine or ten months of the year, and have large trees growing in mid-channel, but are easily flooded by the heavy rains, which sometimes last a fortnight or three weeks.

Here I found many persons "camped," waiting for the waters to go down so that they might cross—you see that as the rivers are generally dry, no bridges are wanted.

I, however, had not to wait so long, as a traveller, whom I had known in the town, came up the next day, and, having a spare horse, said I might use it to get across. The way to swim a horse across a river is to ride in a little way, and then get off and catch hold of his mane or ear, when he will guide himself and his rider across safely.

When I was once on the other side, I had got at last into the wild bush land, where the sheep stations were, only they were much further apart, and the next halting-place was thirty miles away.

However, the road was pretty good, only very lonely. I did not meet a soul all day, and, I was glad just before evening when I heard an old crow's mournful note on a tree, and saw the hawks hovering round; for these were sure signs of man's habitation. For man is the purveyor to these birds, and they act as scavengers in return, and clear up all bits of refuse, which would otherwise become a nuisance in that climate.

At this station there was a traveller's hut—a large wooden place consisting of one room, in which travellers were received for the night—and a man was kept to cook for them. I had a good night's lodging,

and supper and breakfast. But I could not get employment here as I had hoped.

Beyond this station there was no regular road, but only what was called a "marked-tree line," along the coast. That is a piece of bark was stripped off a tree here and there. Occasionally there were a few horse tracks, on softer ground; but the way lay chiefly through broken country, up and down great stony hills and ridges.

I now began to experience the discomfort of having very little water. The next station was thirty miles off, and there was only one drink to be obtained all the way.

It is true that here and there, down in the flats and valleys, there were lonely shepherds' huts; but it would have been almost impossible for a stranger to find them, and there were none near the road. All this was rather discouraging; but after coming so far there was no turning back, so I started very early in the morning.

All this country, too, swarmed with black fellows, who had been driven into the hills and scrubs by the white men and their sheep and cattle.

It is astonishing how these black people manage to keep out of sight, in places where there are plenty of them everywhere. I saw plenty of fresh traces of them, where they had been cutting trees; and more than once I heard them shouting to one another.

It was not a bit of use being afraid, however, as I was obliged to get on. The only thing was to hope for the best.

Once I heard a chopping noise ahead of me, and thought surely I had come upon some men out cutting bark or timber. I quickened my pace, whistling as I went; but when I reached the place, there were the fresh chips under a small tree, where a black fellow had been interrupted in making a ring round it to get the bark off with his stone tomahawk.

Once I left my knife under a tree, and when I went back about a quarter of a mile to look for it, on the ground I saw a naked footprint covering my own! The owner of the foot could not have been skulking many yards away, and had probably followed me out of curiosity. The smallest cover, such as a tuft of grass, will cover them, and, as a last resource, they will crouch and stay motionless, and are often successful in being mistaken for burnt stumps, which are everywhere left by the "bush fires." There are numerous tales of these stumps being mistaken for black fellows, and fired at.

I had gone as I fancied about eight miles, when I lost the track altogether. I managed carelessly to lose sight of the last marked tree, and could neither find that again nor any other. But I was too much accustomed to the "bush" to be much dismayed; and after wasting an hour in looking for the trees, I sat down to think.

I noticed that all the little dry gullies and water-courses sloped in one direction. Now, I thought, if I follow one of these I must come by-and-by to a larger one, and following that again I shall reach one yet larger, and then, sooner or later, I must reach water, and, if I find water, I am certain in this dry region to find a habitation of some kind.

There is nothing like danger to sharpen a man's wits; and although this idea was not quite original, the mere thinking of it showed me that I had yet got my wits about me.

People who are lost in the bush are very apt to lose their wits altogether; and then it is all over with them.

I knew that if I could "hold out" without water for a few hours, I had a very good chance of coming right; so I started, clambering downwards on the side of the gully I had chosen, bringing a small avalanche of stones and loose earth with me at each step.

There seemed to be no living thing except myself in all the bush, and the noise I made seemed almost startling.

The water could not be many miles away; how else could the black fellows live? but they only, perhaps, knew where to find it. Perhaps it was only a little rain-water caught in a natural rock basin.

After a mile or two of this work, my boots began to go to pieces; but the country began to get more level as I went on, and my gully got larger as little ones came into it.

Presently, as I expected, I reached a much broader creek, into which mine entered; and here the stones came to an end, and there were signs of water. The bottom of this new guide was formed of mud and sand, caked hard, and in this grew great waving grass-trees and cabbage-tree palms and beautiful Australian tree-ferns; but I knew that the waters which nourished them might be yet many feet beneath the surface.

By a little examination I found the course of the current, and travelled on. It was now very wearisome walking, as I had to fight my way through tall grass tangled and matted together, and the pointed seeds entered my flesh like little arrows.

Of course all the country I had traversed would have been impassable in rainy weather, every little gully being a raging torrent.

It was now getting late, the sun was low, and I began to fear that I should have to pass the night without water; but still every step took me nearer, as I could see. I startled more than one kangaroo; and there were a few parrots here and there, but all these might roam far from water and return to it before night.

At last I espied right ahead a thin tree-line, and heard the hoarse scream of a cockatoo. I pitched my hat up in the air, and cheered aloud. When I saw the white wings gleaming, I began to run; and there, right before me, was a famous sheet of water, part of a river, and the lily leaves flapped deliciously in the evening breeze. I had a good drink, and smoked a pipe. I had been afraid to smoke before, because it might have made me thirsty.

As I was fumbling in my pouch for a bit of tobacco, I turned over my last shilling. Now I bethought me that, having reached the water, I did not know yet whether I ought to go up or down the stream; for the house or hut of which I was in search might lie in either direction. The thought struck me that I could not do better, as it must be a chance matter, than toss up with this shilling. There was something amusing in this, so I threw the shilling, and arranged that head should mean up, and tail down.

It was a head, so I went up. I had not gone a quarter of a mile, when I saw sheep tracks. I felt as cheerful as a lark. In half an hour I could hear the sheep, and soon saw them feeding contentedly along, and evidently close to home. I had nothing to do now, as I did not see the shepherd, but to follow the bank of the river.

On a small open space right on the edge, I came on it; and the banks behind it were all worn smooth where the sheep went down to water; and there was the shepherd coming up with a bucket of water.

(To be continued.)

